



## CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THIRD COUNTRIES

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**Purpose** – to reveal expression of cultural diversity and intercultural communication in the context of Third countries.

**Methodology** – qualitative research, interviews, analysis of qualitative research, analysis of literature and documents of legislation, generalisation.

**Findings** – research showed: in Lithuania by increasing cultural diversity, micro cultural differences are more and more visible. Cultural fairs, organised by Multicultural Volunteering Centre are giving space for all people better to know each other, helps to insure smooth intercultural communication and cooperation. Research finds, that organizing different events (cultural fairs, reflections and discussion etc.) opens possibility to find surprising aspects in different cultures and it helps better to understand members of other cultures. Also it opens possibility to perceive authentic of others recognising positive sides and it helps to emphasises it and to take as background in future communication: “is good by talking to others to express my opinion”, “is good, that is listening, but important is, that members of Lithuanian society and TCC were searching for problems solving strategy, even if not everything is solved yet...”, “et least we were feeling, that is understood about what problems we have”.



Lithuanian volunteers are stating: „I participated in several discussions about volunteering, also about trafficking in human beings and prostitution, man and woman rights, tolerance and others. [...] After each situation I understood, accurately, once convinced myself, that people are very different even in the same culture. Point of view in to the same thing is always different. After discussions about problematical situations one more time I realised, that people are wishing to blame others not recognising personal behaviour in one or other situation.”, “ People are totally intolerant for intolerant people or intolerant for opinion, which is most different from common opinion. Knowing, that there is no one common truth, or more there is no one person, which has right to decide, which truth is more right, we have to accept every [person], like he is, even those, who not behaviour like me”. Ernatė (2008) notes, that seeking to understand how cultural and social exclusion groups are feeling them selfs is important to reflect diversity of cultures. According to this opinion reflections and discussions were helpful for diverse understanding and fruitful for future communication.

As result we can see that different views can be understood by common participations in reflections and by common voluntary works. Seeking to insure successful interaction between Lithuanian and TCC volunteers was evaluated knowledge and beliefs about dominating (Lithuanian) culture and about cultures of minorities.

In research was evaluated what is important in communication of diverse cultural background volunteers and one of important topics was treatment of every person in equal position. For TCC volunteers this treatment can be expressed by accepting their traditions and communication style, for Lithuanian volunteers equal treatment is expressed by sharing tasks with the same responsibility.

Results of research showed elements of successful communication and cooperation inbetween Lithuanian and TCC volunteers – 1) preparation of lithuanian volunteers to work together with TCC volunteers; 2) attention for the first contact of lithuanian volunteers with TCC volunteers; 3) efforts of TCC volunteer to work together.

**Research limitations** – in qualitative research were participating 12 TCC volunteers and 12 Lithuanian volunteers, after participation in the project “Multicultural volunteering centre (MVC): Lithuanian society and TCC coherence”. Answers of the research participants are based on personal experience and the same or different research can show also other dates.

**Practical implications** – research confirms, that voluntary work together of Lithuanian (or other nationality native) citizens and TCC opens constructive way for better understanding and support each other. All supporting voluntary work elements like



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preparation training and help of social worker during the volunteering are also needed, but the main input for acceptance and good relation is volunteering together. This can be a good model for future activities of TCC and Lithuanian citizens in better understanding. Of course there are things in the model, which can be improved and this can give even more quality for intercultural understanding and acceptance.

**Value** – in the research was analysed and understood what approaches to intercultural diversity are and how they can be influenced. Voluntary work of TCC together with Lithuanian people opens one more method for organizations seeking cooperation of people with diverse cultural backgrounds. Importance of this research in Lithuania is growing together with growing number of immigrants in Lithuania.

**Keywords:** third countries citizens, intercultural communication, volunteering.

**Research type:** viewpoint.